

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 18, 2004. Claims 1 to 15 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1 and 8 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 8 were objected to under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite; Claims 1, 8 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,476,927 (Schwarz); Claims 2 to 7 and 9 to 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,559,933 (Boswell). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 8 have been amended to clearly indicate that the “print request” introduced in the preamble of the claims is the same “print request” referenced in the elements of the claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection.

The present invention concerns an information processing apparatus, such as a management server, connected to a plurality of terminal devices and printers. The management server includes features that allow management of record information including printing date without executing complex processing. With the management server, it is possible to simplify processing because printing data itself is not stored in the apparatus. In addition, it is possible to manage record information including a printing date based on the management server instructing a terminal device to transfer image data to a print destination by the terminal device storing the image data. Therefore, as the management server manages record information (including date) executed based on the instruction by the management server itself, it is possible to manage the record information with certainty.

Turning now to the claims, Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus for instructing a specified terminal device of a plurality of terminal devices connected via a network to transfer image information to a printer in response to a print request from one of the plurality of terminal devices. The information processing apparatus includes: a specifying unit adapted to specify a terminal device, in which image information to be printed has been stored, in accordance with the print request including information for designating a printer as a print destination; a first designating unit adapted to instruct the terminal device specified by said specifying unit to directly transfer the image information to the printer designated as the print destination; and a management unit adapted to manage record information including printing date of the printing performed by the printer based on the instruction by said first designating unit.

In contrast, Schwarz discloses notifying an appropriate printer client based on a job ticket. Schwarz discloses that server 14 receives a job ticket from client 12 (See Schwarz, FIG. 11 and FIG. 16), selects an appropriate printer based on the job ticket, and notifies the client of the selected printer. Printing is then performed dependent upon whether or not the client 12 decides to transfer the print job to the printer. Schwarz does not disclose or suggest instructing a terminal device specified by a specifying unit to directly transfer image information to a printer designated as a print destination.

Furthermore, Schwarz fails to disclose managing record information including printing date of the printing performed by the printer based on the instruction by a designating unit. Instead, Schwarz merely discloses sending status requests and status datagrams between a client and a printer. Therefore, there is no opportunity for the print server to mange record information.

Boswell discloses a printer controller for transferring and printing files originating on mainframe computer systems, workstations, or personal computers connected within a heterogeneous computer network. The printer controller coordinates the distribution of print files across multiple computer systems to attached printers for printing. In response to incoming files received from another computer system within the network, the printer controller utilizes file mask attributes to automatically generate transfer requests and print. However, the printer controller of Boswell functions as a conventional printer server in that the printer controller stores the actual files to be printed in a common database. As such, the printer controller of Boswell does not include the features of instructing a terminal device to directly transfer image information to a printer designated as the print destination and management of record information including printing date of the printing performed by the printer as these features are unnecessary for a centralized printer controller.

Therefore, neither Schwarz nor Boswell, neither alone nor in combination, disclose or suggest at least the features of instructing a terminal device to directly transfer image information to a printer designated as the print destination and management of record information including printing date of the printing performed by the printer. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

Claims 8 and 15 are directed to a method and a computer-readable storage medium storing program code, respectively, in accordance with the features of Claim 1. Applicant submits that the discussion from above with regard to Claim 1 applies equally to Claims 8 and 15. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 8 and 15 are also in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, individual consideration of each dependent claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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